

REMARKS

Claims 1-40 are pending.

The U.S.P.T.O. has objected to the drawings because the reference numeral 170 has been used to designate two different drawing elements. Similarly, the U.S.P.T.O has objected to the specification because the reference numeral 170 is used for a distal end and for a first portion. Applicant has corrected the drawings and the specification in accordance with the Replacement Sheet filed herewith and the foregoing amendment to the specification. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the objection.

Claims 1-40 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Koblish (US 2004/0193149) and/or under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Koblish in view of additionally cited references. An affidavit filed herewith by the Applicant establishes, under 37 CFR 1.131, an invention date of the pending claims prior to the filing date of Koblish, thereby removing the reference as prior art.

Applicant respectfully asserts that the present claims are in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the instant rejections and issuance of a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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